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were entitled to the benefit of the proviso to Section 7 of the Irrigation Regulation. The existence of a provision in the Regulation legalising the custom in such matters and, if his information was correct, of a specific reference to such works in South Travancore in the Statement of Objects and Reasons appended to the Bill which became Regulation III of 1072, would go to show that the proviso was intended to apply to places like South Travancore.

In the G. O. dated the 18th March 1911, which was based on the report of the Peishkars, it was stated that "Proviso to Section 7 is therefore inoperative". The Member said that that was the real cause of all the wrong interpretation and he requested that the same might be removed and clear orders issued not to demand any contribution from the ryots on any irrigation works in the Nanjanad and Edanad taluks.

Dewan's reply.—The matter will be enquired into.

(2) Forest Revenue.

16. The need for the better administration of the Travancore Forests.

Mr. N. Padmanabha Pillai (Member, Karunagappalli taluk) observed that the forests were a valuable asset to the State, because they helped to regulate the climatic conditions and were an important source of revenue to the Government. Every civilised country was taking active steps to develop its forests. In their Administration Report for 1087, the Government had characterised the administration of the forests as satisfactory. The revenue was now slightly more than what it was in the past and some steps had also been taken to improve the forests. All that was due to the present Conservator and the thanks of the people were due to him. But the Member regretted to observe that, if regard was had to the receipts and expenditure of the department, the proportion the latter bore to the former, and also to the kind of protection the forests afforded to the people generally and the agriculturists in particular, the administration of the department could not be said to be satisfactory, either now or in the past. Ever since 1000 M. E. a separate department of forests was organised and it was therefore 88 years since the forests were being managed and worked by an independent officer, the Conservator. Out of the total area of the State, about 2,500 square miles—more than one-third—was now managed by the department. In 1087, the revenue from that area was Rs. 9,56,628, the expenditure Rs. 6,73,245, and the net revenue to the Government Rs. 2,83,383. In Mysore, the forests, covering about an equal area, *viz.*, 2,631 square miles, yielded 22 lakhs, while, in Cochin, an area of only 605 square miles yielded 6 lakhs of rupees per year. The Member said that he was aware that, out of the 22 lakhs in Mysore, as much as 12 lakhs came from sandalwood alone, because, wherever it stood, sandalwood was there the property of the Government. But he failed to see why similar arrangements should not be made here also. So far as Travancore was concerned, he said that, going back 20 years, in 1068, when the total area of the forests was 1,048 square miles, the receipts of the department amounted to Rs. 5,67,687, the expenditure to Rs. 2,90,643, and the net balance to Rs. 2,77,044, which was nearly equal to the net revenue of 1087.

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Dewan.—Mr. Rama Rao says that, in those days, you ha a lot of teak and blackwood in the forests, which were largel felled and sold. Now, what we cut is junglewood; and a large sum of money is also spent on capital works, which will not yield an immediate revenue. There is also much differenc in the cost of felling and working down timber, for in the past, timber was being cut from the river-sides and floa ted, while now we have to go far into the interior of the for ests, and the wages of labour have also considerably risen.

The Member continuing said that, during all those years, the burden of the ryot had also been steadily increasing. The seigniorage rates on many articles were raised and some new species were also brought under the seigniorage system. The noteworthy feature was that, in spite of the taxation in thos and other ways, no appreciable increase was seen in th revenue. One of the reasons, according to the Member, wa that no sustained action was being taken by the department t explore the forests, to find out the innumerable articles c minor forest produce in them and their uses and to work the to the best advantage of the people and the Governmen He mentioned that cardamoms, which had yielded a good rev nue in the past, gave little or nothing now. The receipts und ivory also fell from Rs. 22,000 to Rs. 1,080. It was, therefor evident that much better attention was necessary in th direction.

He next referred to the manner in which elephants we being disposed of by the department and pointed o that, in the generality of cases, the notices regarding t elephant auctions appeared in the Government Gazet after the expiry of the dates fixed for their sale. A an instance in point, he mentioned that the notice regar ing the sale of elephants on the 14th and 22nd Audi 108 was published only in the Gazette of the 22nd Audi 108 In the absence of wide publicity of the notices, elephan were often sold for very low or even nominal prices. In t last sale referred to, 6 elephants were sold for Rs. 7,000. B in a similar auction towards the close of 1086, 8 elepha fetched Rs. 22,000. As the demand for elephants in t State itself was very great, it was necessary that the notices sale should be published sufficiently early and widely al He also suggested the desirability of advertising those sales the local newspapers and of giving intimation, if possib to the Members of the Assembly.

The Member then dwelt at length on the expenditu of the Forest Department and said that there was abs lutely no sense of proportion between the income and t expenditure. Further, the percentage of expenditure the department bore no comparison either with that other departments of the State, such as Land Revenu or of other Native States. To quote some instances, wh the expenditure was 31, 39 and $52\frac{1}{2}$ per cent respectiv ly in the Mysore, Baroda and Cochin States, it was 7 per cent in Travancore. In the opinion of the Memb there was no justification for the high expenditure he especially because the forests had been under the ma agement of a separate department for nearly 90 years, and said that the same should be reduced in such a way as make it bear a reasonable proportion to the receipts of t

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department. During all those years, the department had been spending large sums annually for working down timber to the depots. It was regrettable that no portion had been utilized in opening the forests by improving the means of communication in them. If that had been systematically done, there would have been much better transport facilities now, and it should be possible to reduce the tariff value of timber, which generally included the actual transport charges to the depot and a small margin of profit to the Government. He therefore invited the serious attention of the Government to the subject and he suggested that a decent allotment should be allowed for capital works, such as roads, bridges, the improvement of canals and the like for a series of years until the forests were all opened. It would even be better if the Government could see their way to sanction 10 years' allotment immediately and thereby bring about a substantial improvement of the means of communication to the forests. He said that he was aware of the fact that the matter was receiving some attention from the department and the Government in recent years, but the importance of the subject demanded steady and substained action at the hands of the Government.

The Member next proceeded to consider how the forest administration, as now conducted, affected the people. Till recently, Messrs. Wallibhoy Kaderbhoy and Co., were allowed the first offer of purchasing the teak and blackwood trees in the important depots of the State and timber not required by them was alone available to the people. Fortunately, that contract with the Firm had now ceased, but just before that, the tariff rates on the two species of timber were raised and the export duty on all kinds of timber was also abolished. The result of it all was that the people of the country not only did not derive the benefits eagerly anticipated with the cessation of the contract with the Firm, but their condition was even worse than before. The abolition of the export duty was a step favourable to the foreigners with whom the natives of the country had to compete for timber in the open auctions. Even if the tariff prices were offered by the people of the country, timber would not be sold to them from the depots, but they were asked to await the next auction, when they were obliged to purchase a big lot of timber—much more than their real requirements—at prices much higher than the tariff rates. He said that he could speak with personal knowledge that that was the practice in the Quilon Forest Division. Though the abolition of the export duty on timber was a good step from a commercial point of view, he was compelled to suggest a revival of the duty owing to the practical difficulties the ryots of the country were put to. He further suggested that the tariff rates might also be reduced to the benefit alike of the natives of the country and the foreigner and to the possible advantage of the Government, at least in the long run, from an economic standpoint. In addition to them, it was very necessary that a portion of the timber in each depot—at least one-third—should be reserved for sale at tariff rates to the people of the country, and the balance of timber alone should be disposed of by periodical auctions. He prayed that early orders might be issued in the matter.

Another small measure of reform that he would suggest was that teak should be removed from the list of Royal trees.

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At present the income to the Government from that source was very inappreciable, and if it ceased to be a Royal tree, it would act as an incentive to the people to grow teak largely in their private lands.

The Member next referred with gratification to the action that was being taken by the Conservator in making known to the people the uses of certain kinds of timber and the scope for industries afforded by the Travancore forests. He particularly referred to Mr. Rama Rao's Notes on 'Match-manufacturing Industry' and 'Tea Chest Industry'. The Notes went a great way in stimulating the public mind. But the other professional officers of the department did absolutely nothing in the useful direction indicated by the Conservator. There were several species of timber and other valuable forest produce, about the existence and uses of which the people were ignorant. He therefore suggested that some arrangement might be made by which information on topics like those might be given to the public from time to time in the form of pamphlets and leaflets similar to those issued by the Agricultural Department. He also requested that the Annual Reports of the Forest Department might be published in the Gazette and made available to the public.

Dewan's reply.—The remarks of the Member will be communicated to the Conservator of Forests. I am sure that the latter will find them suggestive and useful.

17. **The difficulties now experienced in securing and transporting fuel and green manure required for agricultural purposes.**

Mr. T. Kumara Pillai (Member, Kalkulam taluk) said that the subject was one that had been brought forward at the last session, but, as the ryots did not obtain any relief, it had to be taken up again. In the last issue of the Gazette, dated the 30th Makaram 1088, a G. O. had appeared—No. 1423/L. R. & A. dated the 8th February 1913—which gave the required relief to the ryots in two matters, *viz.*, abolition of the system of weighing cartloads of firewood for the levy of fee and the abolition of passes for the removal of green manure from private lands. The Member thanked the Government for those beneficial changes.

He then pointed out that the difficulties experienced by the people in getting free passes for transporting fuel from the registered lands were so great that to purchase fuel was thought to be less wasteful in regard to time and money. The applications for free passes had, under the rules, to be made to the Divisional Forest Officer. That was inconvenient especially because of the inordinate delay in the Divisional office. After repeated applications, the matter would be referred to the Forest Ranger, who would take his own time to inspect the place whence the fuel had to be removed. After that, the applicants would be told to cut and stack all the wood at once. The insistence was obviously inconvenient as it would not be possible for the ryots to collect a large supply lasting for months. Ordinarily, what they would require was a small supply which they could then afford to lay in for. Nor would it be easy to collect the firewood at one locality and arrange to watch it during the long period to be followed till the passes were actually granted. In practice the department never *refused* to give a pass, but, for one reason or other, by their delay and laxity, passes would not

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